

Willie Blount to Andrew Jackson, December 22, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

WILLIE BLOUNT TO JACKSON.¹

¹ Another letter of Blount to Jackson, of this same date, was published in the *Intelligencer*, June 9, 1828, and in Parton's *Jackson*, I. 479.

Nashville, December 22, 1813

Dear sir , I have recd. yours of the 12th. and 13th. Instant and had previously written to you by Express two or three times on several of the heads mentioned. I much regret the situation of affairs at your Camp occasioned by circumstances which neither you nor I could controul with our best exertions. The U. S. Volunteers from your Army have not yet arrived here. on their arrival I will endeavor to act for the best in some provisional or conditional way as I have no authority or instructions from Government about their discharge. it appears to me to be too great a responsibility for me to take to discharge them absolutely. I cannot say what can be done respecting their return; however, from your request, and from my own feelings, I will do all I can to serve them, and to serve the public. I respect them as brave men, and for their services which have been important. I want them to get their pay, and hope that the President who alone can order their discharge will order that they shall be paid.

I send you a copy of the Secy War's letter to me of the 13th. July last, and of his chief clerk, Mr. D. Parker's letter of subsequent date to Col. Meigs, under which two letters, I acted in calling out the 1500 men, as you will see by a copy of my orders to Major Genl. John Cocke, now at your request sent to you. I also send the copy of my letter to the Secy

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War of the 10th. Instant, on the subject of instructions relative to the term of service of the Troops generally now with you and Genl. Cocke, and if to be discharged, enquiring when, by whose order, and how their places are to be supplied, which will shew you and those with you that I have been endeavoring to get the necessary information, respecting the terms of service of the forces with you, and that I had written before respecting the volunteers. It is the clearest exposition that I can give you of his instructions, or of the law of this State of the 24th. Septr. last. I send you copies of the Acts of our Assembly respecting the 3500 men, and exempting them from process whilst in service, copies of all which I think you had best send to Genl. Pinckney. You will see by all those letters etc. etc., that I could not when calling out the men into service, know how long they were expected to serve, and that I have no instructions about their discharge. The Executive of a state cannot without orders from Government discharge U. S. Troops. I may surely expect an answer to my letters which I will make known to you when recd. all Troops in the service of the U. S. must of course expect the President's order for their discharge. I have sent a copy of all the orders which I issued to you, and to Genl. Cocke, on to the War Dept. for the information of Government, long since. I do most earnestly wish that all the Troops that have been in service, or that now are on this campaign may be paid; their services have been very important; they have done much; but if the Government should not think with them about the term of service I should regret it; the consequences to them may be serious, and they, to be sure on that head, had better continue a short time longer in service, than the time they consider to be a term, than to jeopardize their pay; I say this as their friend.